disclosure of the impending adoption of a dictatoral régime might have influenced them adversely. Once the loan was obtained, and when it was deemed that the favour with which the National Peasant Party was regarded had somewhat subsided, owing to the unpopular budget measures it had adopted, M. Mironescu was forced to resign, and death having removed in the meantime the most determined adversary of the King, M. Vintila Bratianu, the former now proceeded to unfold his plan of action.

M. Titulescu was once more summoned to Bucarest and asked to form a broad Coalition Cabinet; but as the National Peasant Party refused to lend its support to a cabinet which would have contained two royal favourites, Manoilescu and Argentoianu, M. Titulescu wisely abandoned the task and returned to London.

The next step of Carol was an attempt to follow the nefarious example of his brother-in-law, the Serbian monarch, and form a military cabinet, but the Spanish revolution which broke out at the time induced him hastily to alter his plans.

M. Argentoianu, who had in the meantime become the favourite adviser of the King, opted for the dissolution of the Chamber and the formation of a cabinet of "technical" experts to shore up the tottering framework; himself to occupy the two most important posts, those of the Ministry of Finances and of the Interior. The technical capacities of M. Argentoianu are of peculiarly sinister character, judging from what former colleagues of his have to say of his activities. Thus General Averescu, in whose cabinet he held the post of Minister of Finances ad-interim, accuses him of unconstitutionally squandering £1,500,000, of thereby defrauding the State, and rendering himself liable to penalties provided in Art. 326 of the Rumanian penal code, as well as in Art. 3 of the law regarding ministerial responsibilities—infractions that had been established by the Judicial authorities in 1923, if we are to trust General Averescu's affirmations as they were published and reproduced in a series of articles in all the principal Bucarest newspapers during January, 1932. Another ex-Finance Minister, M. Virgil Madgearu, on whose integrity we may rely, likewise

645 accuses him of having caused a loss of 90 million lei to the State in 1921, and further affirms that Argentoianu never offered a satisfactory explanation of the reasons which led him to operate so disadvantageously to the interests of the State, though he had been interpellated several times on the subject in the Chamber. We may surmise, therefore, that the technical capacities of M. Argentoianu, who enjoys the reputation of being an arch cynic, were somewhat deficient from the moral point of view, and in order to compensate for this shortcoming the respectable personality of Prof. Iorga, upon whom the dignity of Prime Minister was foisted, was made use of to complete the Cabinet. We may take it for granted that Prof. Iorga, who is a distinguished historian and man of letters, was, like Plato's model ruler, least eager to rule, for he was engaged in an occupation better than ruling, and led a life finer than that of those wielding authority. But his duty to his former royal pupil, as he conceived it, compelled him to quit his life of contemplation and return to work for the general good in what, according to Plato, is the ' cave.' Prof. Iorga, doubtless, must have lost sight to some extent of the difference between the perfect State, which is unattainable, and the good State which is a present possibility, as expounded respectively in the " Republic " and the " Laws." Otherwise, he would have halted before returning to the darkness of the cave. His presence would have been desirable in such conditions as prevail in the unattainable and ideal perfect State, but such would not be those obtaining in a State with the present possibilities of Rumania.

642 645 It is to this confusion of ideas, as well as to the evident desire to exert even a limited restraining influence on his sovereign, that we must have recourse in order to explain Prof. Iorga's consent to read a royal decree dissolving Parliament and ordering new elections to be held in June, 1931.[1]

[1] In an interview published by the "Echo de Paris," June 29th, 1930, Professor Iorga stated, amongst other things, that "whenever the party spirit overruled the spirit of patriotism he would be found by the side of the King, in order to defend the supreme interests of the nation." Professor Iorga's attachment to the throne is explicable by his traditionalism. As a historian he sees in his sovereign, the lineal descendant of Stephen the Great, or of Michael the Brave. A non-Rumanian, however, may be dispensed from taking such a view, and excused if he does not hold a very high opinion of a scion of the Hohenzollerns who promulgates rascally laws defrauding the unwary foreign investor and trader.

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A very unfavourable impression was created by the dismissal of the Chamber controlled by the National Peasant Party, the only standard-bearer of democracy in the country. It is probable that the electorate would have reacted with more spirit if the people had not foreseen that the thwarting of the royal will would have entailed the abolition of even the semblance of a Parliamentary system, and the proclamation of a pure dictatorship. Though not to an overwhelming extent, violence and illegality were pretty freely employed, to judge from the cases reported in the Press, yet in spite of all these artifices and the mass abstention of its opponents the elements supporting the Iorga-Argentoianu Coalition secured only 48% of the total votes cast; a very meagre performance indeed if it be remembered that even the Liberal party figured among its supporters.

That the Iorga-Argentoianu Cabinet did not fulfil the hopes placed in it by the King became obvious when he again summoned M. Titulescu, early in 1932, to Bucarest, and asked him to form a broad coalition cabinet. No real coalition cabinet truly representative of the national will could be formed without the inclusion of the National Peasant Party, and the leaders of the latter, when sounded, replied in a truly dignified manner that so long as constitutional methods were not observed they would abstain from participation. M. Titulescu gave up the mission and once more returned to his ambassadorial duties in London. Even those who by their votes helped the Cabinet to install itself in office seemed to have turned against it, for during a sitting of the Rumanian Senate on December 5th, 1931, M. Pillat, belonging to the Liberal party, delivered the following trenchant criticism on the Cabinet: "When you came to power you had promised three principal things: 1st, reduction of the Budget and a lightening of taxation through economies; 2nd, a redressing of the financial and economic situation and of the agrarian crisis; 3rd, penalties for all abuses. But what has been realised? The policy of feigned economies has not stopped the practice of dissipation, aggravated by fresh injustices. In a time of such poverty you have not only maintained old sinecurist in office but you have created even new ones. Favourites of other régimes who exert cumulative

645 functions have been left undisturbed. We have a plethora
665 of functionaries drawing starvation wages instead of a body of well-selected officials decently rewarded. You who have no party and no party attachments to satisfy, and who always attacked political parties, might have effected this change easily, but you have not done so. The reductions in the Budget were necessary, yet they ought not to have cut into the very vitals of the country. The financial policy of M. Argentoianu may be qualified as the policy of bankruptcy. No institution, however strong its foundations, can resist it. You have destroyed the schools and disorganized the army by a criminal reduction of credits. In the name of the Liberal party I must affirm that we cannot accept a constitutional theory which, if it be applied, will debilitate our political life, and by the elimination of political parties vitiate the expression of the national will in its essence, expose the Crown dangerously to attack, and even provide the possibility of irremediably compromising it."

871 The indictment with regard to the schools found in the
652 above rebuke refers to the decision taken by the Government to shift on to the municipalities 50 per cent of the educational charges. As the Municipal authorities cannot balance their budgets, and as an example the community of Solca was cited, which with a total annual budget of 430,000 lei would have been obliged to incur an additional expenditure of 400,000 lei in order to provide for the maintenance of its primary school, the deputies admitted that such charges were beyond the resources of the municipalities to bear, and the proposed legislation was at last rejected after a most strenuous opposition from the National Peasant Party supported by the Liberal deputies who had hitherto sided with the Government.

871 Another cause likely to prejudice education in Rumania
875 is the non-payment of salaries to teachers. During the sitting of the Chamber on April 4th, 1932, a case was reported of certain teachers, who are all State functionaries in Rumania, who had not received their pay for seven months. Associations of teachers in various localities have called meetings and have addressed telegrams of protest on the subject to the King. Thus, those of the region of Radauţi on

certain extent, as apparently the new French government will be less inclined to make financial advances. Nevertheless the Cabinet will hesitate to assume the responsibility of openly defaulting, lest such action should be resented by France and to a lesser extent by England, and bring about Rumania's political isolation in face of Russia. So that, strange as it may seem, the dread of the Bolsheviks may contribute to the respect of engagements, the repudiation of which would be applauded by the latter.

The press organ of General Averescu, the " Indreptarea," in its issues of 12th and 18th May, 1932, contains some interesting comments on the findings of the French experts. It thus affirms that the experts have ascertained that there is a lack of control in the handling of the public funds, that there is a great redundancy of officials, and that huge frauds are committed at the expense of the State revenues. As an example, the case of the revenue from the Customs was given, which was estimated at 1,200 million lei, yet only yielded 400 millions, the balance of 800 millions having been fraudulently diverted to other pockets than that of the State. M. Rist, affirms the " Indreptarea," had recommended a compression of the expenses through the dismissal of a large number of functionaries, and the creation of a control of all payments made to the State so as to eliminate the numerous frauds to which the Budget deficit is principally due. If these reforms were effected, Rumania, according to M. Rist, could fulfil her external obligations. However, the findings of the experts were not likely to enhance the prestige of Rumania in Paris and it hardly seemed likely that the French would now keep their promise made to M. Argentoianu to give pecuniary assistance to Rumania, unless they were allowed to exert a control which would be tantamount to applying to Rumania the status of what in its essence would be a colonial dependency. Such measures, if their acceptance were advocated by the Government, would weaken its prestige to such an extent that it could no longer maintain itself in power, even if it enjoyed royal support. The weakening of its authority was manifested by its decision not to allow the holding of municipal elections which were to take place in

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645 June, 1932, a measure which is resented by all political [664] parties as a formal violation of the constitution. [644]

From the above it will be clear that whatever popularity the Iorga-Argentoianu Cabinet may have enjoyed, and whatever the hopes to which it may have given rise on its formation, these have now been totally dispelled. This is not without causing a distinct prejudice to Rumania, for undoubtedly, Prof. Iorga is one of the most distinguished Rumanians and represents an immense moral asset for the country. He would have proved an ideal chief for a broad coalition of all political parties, and his presence, owing to his integrity as well as to his erudition would have immensely strengthened the position of such a popularly elected government.

Owing to the marked " lipsandry " from which Rumania is suffering, it was an unpardonable mistake on the part of her ruler to expose an eminent personality like that of Prof. Iorga to risk his reputation, and by trading on his sentiments of devotion to the throne to force him to join a team headed by an Argentoianu, who, according to General Averescu, ought to be in the dock, and not on the Ministerial bench.[1]

665 With the passing of time, and with the worsening of the situation, attacks on the present régime have become more virulent. General Averescu, who under Rumania's former kings was often appealed to on difficult circumstances, and who feels that he has been undeservedly ousted by the Iorga-Argentoianu combination, continues his vehement attacks on both Government and King, whom he threatens with the fate of Prince Cuza, deposed forcibly in 1866. Far more significant, however, is the attitude of the National Peasant Party, which so far has maintained a very dignified attitude. All of a sudden on May 15th, 1932, the " Patria," the organ of the Transylvanian section of the party, launched a virulent attack on the régime, denouncing the scandalous exploitation to which Transylvania is being subjected and threatening with a demand for autonomy. This campaign,

[1] In June, 1932, the "Dreptatea" repeatedly accused Argentoianu of having appropriated 20 million lei of public money, of which, 12 millions between May 17th and 31st, and eight millions on June 3rd and 4th, after he had resigned from office.

668 resound from the province across the Carpathians are not isolated. The whole country is agitated by this discontent which may explode at any moment."

The above statements should not be taken as outbursts of spite, for even in official publications, such as the bulletin of the Constantsa Chamber of Commerce, we come across similar pronounçements: "We are facing a complete economic disaster. All the productive forces of the country are exhausted. All private savings lent on credit are lost owing to general insolvency. The State is unable to collect even one fourth of the direct taxes it imposes. We have arrived at this state of affairs owing to the irrational financial policy of post-war governments . . . . . Great mistakes were committed, and this fact should be admitted before we start on the right path. Many of our rulers were incompetent and dissipated, not to say that they acted as profiteers." (February, 1932, p. 23-26.)

645 [652] Since proofs were submitted the following events have occurred in Rumania:

Owing to the growing discontent among public functionaries, pensioners and officers at their not receiving their pay, the King felt constrained to enjoin the Cabinet to satisfy forthwith the legitimate claims of these public servants. The government, unable to comply with this behest, tendered its resignation early in June, whereupon the King once more convoked M. Titulescu to Bucarest, and bade him form a coalition cabinet. M. Titulescu's efforts proved again fruitless; for while the National Peasant Party did not refuse its co-operation, the Liberal Party asked that it should be entrusted with a mandate to form a government, as it pretended to be strong and capable enough to deal singly with the situation.

666 As, however, no party possessed a majority in the Chamber, it was decided to dissolve it, and to appeal to the electorate. M. Vaida-Voevod, who is known to be strongly opposed to gerrymandering, and other electoral abuses in vogue in Rumania, formed a provisional government to supervise the elections. These were held in July, and the

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National Peasant Party, though it polled less than 50% of the votes cast, secured 272 seats against 114 won by the Opposition. (The Liberals obtained 28, and the section of the party led by M. G. Bratianu, 14 mandates.)

M. Vaida-Voevod having discharged the duty assigned to him retired from office; but as the National Peasant Party possessed a working majority in the newly-elected Chamber, it was called upon to assume power. The Opposition attempted to challenge the right of the National Peasant Party to govern the country owing to the smallness of the poll it secured at the elections, though it was the Liberal party itself, now heading the Opposition, which introduced the law conferring a majority of seats in the Chamber on the party which would poll 40% of the votes.

M. Maniu was besought by his partisans to resume once more the premiership, but after several interviews with the King, declared himself unable to do so. He recommended, however, M. Vaida-Voevod to undertake the task, and accordingly a Cabinet headed by the latter was formed which includes both M. Mihalache and M. Madgearu, and other prominent members of the party. The government thus formed proceeded to secure a loan of 50 million swiss francs, wherewith to pay its officials for the time being, and to publish its program, which in the main lines aims at: Reforming the present electoral law, reintroducing administrative decentralization, and reorganizing the railway administration. Equitable treatment of minorities is promised, as well as a modification of the law concerning the conversion of agrarian debts. At the same time State finances are to be reorganized with the co-operation of the League of Nations.

This last plan, however, will not work out so smoothly, for the Opposition will do its utmost to stir up popular feeling against it. Even when two League delegates arrived in June, 1932, to examine the economic situation, the Press was unanimous in deprecating this public investigation and treating it as an offence against the country's dignity. The most widely read paper, having a daily circulation of some 40,000 copies, appeared with a leading article entitled "the day of shame."